

Message Text

SECRET

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70

ORIGIN EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-20 PM-07 DODE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 L-03 NSC-10 TRSE-00 OMB-01 EB-11 AID-20

MC-02 /100 R

DRAFTED BY EA/IMS:TJCHEAVNER:LGR
APPROVED BY EA - RICHARD L. SNEIDER

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R 242023Z OCT 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

S E C R E T STATE 209909

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, SN

SUBJ: DIRECTED PROCUREMENT FOR LASS

REF: A) STATE 207730; B) SINGAPORE 3942;
C) SINGAPORE 4089.

1. OCT 24 DEPTOFF INFORMALLY RAISED QUESTION FY 75
DIRECTED PROCUREMENT WITH SINGAPORE AMBASSADOR MONTEIRO
INDICATING SOME PROS AND CONS IN OUR THINKING AND EMPHA-
SIZING FACT NO DECISION YET TAKEN. MONTEIRO RESPONDED
WITH OBSERVATION (REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES) THAT PRIME
MINISTER LEE FROM OUTSET HAD SAID GOS DID NOT WANT LOCK-
HEED IN SINGAPORE UNLESS IT COULD COMPETE SUCCESSFULLY
WITHOUT SUBSIDY. GOS ONLY INTERESTED IN VENTURES WHICH
SHOW PROFIT, DOES NOT WANT FIRMS WHICH MUST HAVE FOREIGN
CRUTCH TO SURVIVE. HE WENT ON, HOWEVER, TO POINT OUT THAT
EXISTENCE LASS FACILITY COULD BE IMPORTANT IN ANY FUTURE
MILITARY SITUATION REQUIRING U.S. NAVAL PRESENCE IN INDIAN
OCEAN. ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT MAKE POINT DIRECTLY, IMPLI-
CATION WAS THAT EXISTENCE LASS REPAIR FACILITY COULD BE
IMPORTANT TO SECURITY OF REGION AND HENCE TO SINGAPORE
SECURITY.

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2. MONTEIRO ATTACHES LITTLE ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE TO CONTINUATION LASS OPERATIONS, NOTING THAT SINGAPOREANS EMPLOYED THERE COULD EASILY BE ABSORBED IN BOOMING, LABOR SHORT SINGAPORE ECONOMY. HE ALSO COMMENTED THAT LASS CHANGI OPERATIONS ARE QUITE PROFITABLE AND COULD BE CONTINUED EVEN IF LASS SELETAR SHUT DOWN AS RESULT OF ANY DECISION DISCONTINUE DIRECTED PROCUREMENT.

3. MONTEIRO CONCLUDED BY SAYING HE WOULD WRITE TO DEFENSE MINISTER GOH, REQUESTING GOH'S VIEWS, WHICH HE WILL RELAY TO US.

4. SUGGEST YOU FOLLOW UP ON THIS APPROACH BY RAISING QUESTION WITH GOH OR LEE, WITH OBJECT OF GETTING CLEAR INDICATION HOW MUCH IMPORTANCE LEE ATTACHES TO LASS OPERATIONS AND OUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF THEM. KISSINGER

SECRET

NNN

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